

REMARKS

General Remarks

Applicant has carefully studied the outstanding Office Action in the present application. The present amendment is intended to be fully responsive to all points of rejection raised by the Examiner in the Office Action mailed May 24, 2004, and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of all claims under consideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 8 – 17 are pending in the application. Claims 1 – 7 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 8 and 17 are currently amended.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶1

Claims 8 – 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §, ¶1 as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 8 – 17 are corrected to recite a printed circuit board panel. Support for this terminology is found, *inter alia*, on page 2, line 6 of the application.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2.

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. Claim 17 is corrected to recite that the "plurality of electrical circuits formed on a printed circuit board panel define at least one printed circuit board (PCB)".

The prior art rejections.

Claims 8 – 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being anticipated by Samuel (U.S. 6,483,937). Applicants respectfully traverse the above rejections as applied to each rejected claim.

Samuel describes a computer operated process for inspecting patterns on an object that includes establishing different mismatch margins for different patterns.

Claim 8 includes, *inter alia*, the following distinguishing recitation:

obtaining at least two different references,
each of said at least two references
corresponding to one of at least two

distinct electrical circuit configurations
to be inspected.

As noted above, Samuel describes a computer operated process for inspecting patterns on an object that includes establishing different mismatch margins for different patterns. Although the process described in Samuel may be employed in the fabrication of semiconductors, printed circuit boards and the like, both of the different patterns (one being associated with master pattern # 1 and one being associated with master pattern #2 respectively) are not, and can not be, distinct electrical circuit configurations since "semiconductor device and/or circuit components **are formed only** in active areas 12" (col. 2, lines 58 - 60). The other areas shown and described in Samuel constitute inactive areas 14 (referred to as fill areas), transition areas 15 and mask alignment mark areas 18, which do not include semiconductor devices and/or circuit components and thus do not meet the requirement of being distinct electrical circuit configurations.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 8 is patentable over Samuel. Applicant therefore respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw this rejection of claim 8 and its dependent claims 9 - 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Conclusion and request for telephone interview.

In view of the foregoing, this application is believed to be in order. Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully solicited.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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